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Composting History: The Terrifying Melancholia of *Pornoterrorismo*

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Abstract: This paper applies recent US queer theories of temporality to the practice of “pornoterrorism,” a form of direct action performance art that combines queer feminist “postpornographic” practices with political commentary and poetic personal narrative. Focusing on a 2010 performance staged by Argentine performer Leonor Silvestri and Spanish performer Diana Torres, the essay examines sexual and political trauma across the Spanish postcolonial Atlantic. The confrontation of theory and practice, as well as the transnational complications of colonizer and colonized, effects the mutual corrosion of each, such that violent histories “compost” to create the potential for new forms of pleasure and political resistance.

Keywords: pornoterrorism, Argentina, Spain, performance art, postpornography, feminism, Leonor Silvestri, Diana Torres, postcolonial



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Take Pornoterrorism and make it your own, eat from it, let yourself be possessed by it, so its mutation continues in as many ways as there are bodies, that its elusive form continues leaking out of our hands, either to tickle us, or because it has cut our flesh and we now bleed.

Fight with us. This is as much an invitation as it is a mandate. May it rain blood.

—*Leonor Silvestri*¹

This essay frames an intertextual interaction between trends in contemporary American queer theory and a *Pornoterrorista*, or Pornoterrorist, performance named “Perfo Luddita En Valencia” by Argentine artist Leonor Silvestri and Spanish performer Diana Torres, staged in Valencia, Spain in February 2010.² In her “Manifiesto Pornoterrorista,” Torres sums up this practice concisely:

Pornoterrorism is a political-artistic concept developed by Diana Junyent Torres (Madrid 1981) that has diverse ways of being represented. One of them, possibly the most important, is direct action, performance. A pornoterrorist performance has a few basic ingredients: poetry (obscene, insurgent, revindictive, surrealist), the naked body as a tool of provocation and communication, the image projected during the performance (pornographic, war films, gore, surgical, deviant,

1 Leonor Silvestri (Luddita Sexual), “Manifiesto Pornoterrorista Luddita Sexual,” web log post, *Ludditas Sexuales*, 25 Aug. 2011, web, 11 Sept. 2011, <<http://ludditosexxxual.blogspot.com/2011/08/manifiesto-pornoterrorista-luddita.html>>. My translation.

2 Once available on Silvestri’s Vimeo stream as “Perfo Luddita En Valencia,” under her account, Ludditas Sexuales, the video has disappeared from that address and has been dispersed across many other porn sites. The video seems to have been poached from Silvestri’s vimeo and loaded onto Xhamster.com. Other links to the video can be found on sites like Porn Finder under the categories “Gay Porn” and “Public Nudity.” Indeed, performance art and live sex shows are a form of public nudity that might then be filtered back into pornography sites, massively consumed once again as an online video, but a video performed with a difference. Although found on sites that are dominated by heterosexual pornography, comments on this video like “asqueroso y patetico” (disgusting and pathetic) show that the piece is not so easily consumed or understood when filtered back into the hetero porn sites. See “Perfo Luddita en Valencia,” Xhamster.com – Daily Free Porn Videos, web, <http://xhamster.com/movies/773761/perfo_luddita_en_valencia.html>.



distressing), blood and pain (utilized in a cathartic form), sex and orgasm, rage and nonconformity.³

Of the ingredients listed above, two are distinctly missing from the performance I address here: projections and blood. In fact, given that each of the performers relies so heavily on bloodletting, including facial piercing or menstrual blood, as a performative tool for provoking both abjection and the visceral reception to their pieces, its absence in this performance is striking.⁴ What is left is an intensely corporeal interaction between the two performers that relies more on poetry than visual projections and on allegory more than actual bloodletting to invoke a collectively melancholic relation to violent pasts. The theme of blood nevertheless flows through this performance as Torres and Silvestri unite from Madrid, Spain and Buenos Aires, Argentina to spill the specters of other bloods and other histories onto Spanish soil.

By allowing bloodletting to remain allegorical in this performance, Silvestri may be insisting that viewers not conflate historical and present pulsations as either too literal or too causal. I argue that this evocative withholding leads the audience to recognize the unpredictable erotic connections that throb between past and present. Thus, blood becomes a metaphor for more abstract losses: loss of familial ties as well as mass losses that arise from state-sanctioned violence, genocide, torture under dictatorship, and the layering of multiple colonizations over time. The performance conjures all of these losses as it references Hitler, encounters with incest, the torture of the *desaparecidos* (the disappeared) under Argentine dictatorship, and the colonization of Latin America. Ultimately, the piece references these personal and political traumas so the performers might loosen the icy hold of these histories through the pleasure-centered pulsations of the sequential acts I analyze here.

These blissfully counterhistorical reworkings of pleasure demand that violent histories be read in conjunction with consensual/performed violence on stage. Pornoterrorists seek a language of “postpornography” that has the potential to resonate beyond the predominantly

3 Diana J. Torres, “Manifiesto Pornoterrorista,” web log post, *Pornoterrorismo*, Feb. 2009, web, 15 Mar. 2011, <<http://pornoterrorismo.com/manifiesto-transfeminista/manifiesto-pornoterrorista/>>. My translation.

4 Whereas Torres uses facial piercing, Silvestri describes the necessity of menstrual blood among other fluids in her pornoterrorist ritual: “Fluids and scatology of all kinds: squirt, flow, semen, human blood (especially menstrual), shit (my translation),” “Fluidos y escatologías de toda índole: squirt, flujo, semen, sangre humana sobre todo menstrual, mierda.” See: Silvestri.



white Anglo/European male production and theorizations of pornography.⁵ They aim to interrogate us by evoking abject histories alongside desirous situations, complicating our consumption of their self-declared “postpornographic” piece. Silvestri and Emmanuel Theumer contextualize pornoterrorist practices within both these deconstructive repurposings of erotic content and a history of “action” art in the later twentieth century.

Facing the construction of certain bodies and practices conceived as monstrous or mutilated, postporno does a copyleft, and via “cut and paste” of Viennese Actionism it hangs the abject body in place of the body of desire. It was activated like this, with respect to dominant porn, a new semiological-hormonal system that, to involve the spectator, works directly over the nervous system of the participant...⁶

In scenes that invoke the sexual arrangements of queer BDSM⁷ while simultaneously referencing problematic historical moments, the performance navigates various times that might be experienced as both violently abject and sexually exciting. The condensations of individuals and collectives is made possible in this performance by displacements of certain histories onto others and through a visceral fusion between blood that is both ours and not our own.⁸ Thus,

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- 5 “The concept called ‘post-porn’ was invented by erotic photographer Wink van Kempen and made popular by sexwork activist and performance artist Annie M. Sprinkle. It claimed a new status of sexual representation: Through identifying with critical joy and agency while deconstructing its hetero/normative and naturalizing conditions, Sprinkle made us think of sex as a category open for use and appropriation of queer-feminist counter-pleasures beyond the victimizing framework of censorship and taboo.” Tim Stüttgen, ed., *Post/Porn/Politics: Symposium Reader—Queer-Feminist Perspectives on the Politics of Porn Performance and Sex Work as Cultural Production* (Berlin: B-Books, 2009).
- 6 Leonor Silvestri and Emmanuel Theumer, “Pánico, Locura y Tetas en el PornoTerrorismo Ibérico” [Panic, Madness, and Tits in Iberian Pornoterrorism], Second International Congress of Artes en Cruces: Bicentenarios Latinoamericanos y Globalización, panel: Perspectivas Posthumanistas de las Corporalidades y sus Potencias, Buenos Aires, 4–6 Oct. 2010.
- 7 BDSM refers to a variety of erotic practices typically involving dominance and submission, role-playing, and restraint.
- 8 Indeed, the histories referenced in this piece are not my own, and I may only relate to the specific effects of these histories through the corporeal articulations of the performers as one audience member with my own personal and national veins of reference. I came across this performance while doing participatory research in 2010 with the groups Coordinadora Universitaria por la Disidencia Sexual (CUDS) and Kolectiva 28 in Santiago and Valparaíso, Chile. The group CUDS started a series of post-porn workshops in April 2009 that resulted in a collective (el Colectivo Subporno) that bears similarities to the *Pornoterrorismo* of both Torres and Silvestri: See SubPorno, <<http://subporno.blogspot.com/p/subporno.html>>. While I was in Chile, CUDS was conducting their second circuit of sexual dissidence in May of 2010: “Resumen Fotográfico del Segundo Circuito de



I argue that this performance does not merely reproduce patriarchal violences and histories. Moving elsewhere from what José Muñoz has called “recycling” in his concept of disidentification as a strategy of survival for queers of color, these Pornoterroristas compost and transform brutal pasts into a different and potentially more threatening form than the histories from which they emerge.⁹

Torres warns us, “The show is not suitable for all audiences. It’s indispensable to come with a well lubricated mind, ready for a massive penetration without prior warning.” She suggests that we prepare our minds as she prepares physically to receive Silvestri’s fist, gun, and dildo in the scenes that follow, through lubrication that can be both mental and physical. This statement also implies the potential visceral fusion between her visual presence on stage and our minds, opening up the possibility that we could receive this performance as widely and wantonly as she receives Silvestri’s fist, for example, to facilitate a retelling of losing bodies in engorged times.

Scene 1: “I don’t know what happened to me”

On a dimly lit and minimally furnished stage, the two performers read a short poem to begin their performance in Valencia (February, 2010).¹⁰ Torres begins, “It’s midnight,” followed by Silvestri, “I don’t know what happened to me.” Torres continues, “It’s midnight,” and Silvestri adds, “The dog talks to me.” They continue in an elusively macabre and innocent tone that

Desidencia Sexual,” web log post, *Disidencia Sexual, La Revista Virtual de la CUDS*, 22 June 2010, web, July 2010, <<http://www.disidenciasexual.cl/2010/06/resumen-fotografico-del-segundo-circuito-de-desidencia-sexual/>>.

9 See: José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1999) 72. In reference to the problematics of colonial fantasies in the pages of Robert Mapplethorpe’s *Black Book*, Muñoz writes, “I am suggesting that, for some spectators, this confrontation with whiteness does not occlude the pleasure that such images offer, but rather, that such confrontations can be part of a disidentificatory project that manages to partially *recycle* and hold on to these representations.” Similarly, Pornoterrorists partially recycle their own transnational colonial fantasies that circulate readily in the present, identifying strongly with the erotics of those fantasies while disavowing the preservation of an unquestioned colonial history by their perversions of it.

10 Poem: “It’s midnight. I don’t know what happened to me. It’s midnight. The dog talks to me. It’s midnight. I think I understand what it says. It’s midnight. I’ll have a party. It’s midnight. Everyone will be there. It’s midnight. A party of wolves. Oww oww.” (my translation)



implies a theme that continues to appear in the poetry they read over their performance: child molestation.

By including poetry that references childhood abuse read alongside the sexual arrangements of this performance, Silvestri may be implying that children have not been successfully protected by society, a highly sensitive issue in many cultures and contexts. According to Gayle Rubin, “For over a century, no tactic for stirring up erotic hysteria has been as reliable as the appeal to protect children. The current wave of erotic terror has reached deepest into those areas bordered in some way, if only symbolically, by the sexuality of the young.”¹¹ The “erotic terror” that Pornoterrorists seek to detonate in their performance seems to be an intentional appeal to the hysteria of the audience around child sexuality. In “Perfo Luddita En Valencia,” spectators may experience this narrative of abuse and innocence as an unsettling preface to the act that follows.

Torres kneels on all fours and spreads her legs outward, a harness attached to her shoulders and a dildo protruding upward from her back. A grinding recording of an electric guitar screeches an eerie downward scale as Silvestri, standing behind Torres, slaps her ass and smooths her hands firmly up Torres’s back and swiftly back down to her buttocks. An audience member jeers at her, “Loca!” (Crazy!) while another audience member lets out a howl of approval. Silvestri pauses dramatically and then steps one leg and then the other threateningly to each side of Torres, whose eyes dart nervously back at Silvestri in anticipation. Silvestri does a wiggle with a fixed smirk on her face, a contortion between pleasure and menace. She maintains a firm gaze toward the audience members, who emit a loud hum of excited chatters and screeches. Grabbing the dildo on Torres’s back, she expeditiously lowers herself over it, engulfing it vaginally. The guitar screeches along with industrial noises to the pace of her thrusting as she continues to smile smugly, looking down at Torres occasionally. She grasps her own dildo and bangs it against Torres’s shaved head. Grabbing the straps of Torres’s harness that lie over her shoulders, Silvestri violently jolts them upwards to meet the forward thrust of her hips ...

The possible consent of the child is called into question by the tone of the poem read prior to this scene of physical contact between the performers. In an innocent and passive voice, Silvestri says, “I don’t know what happened to me,” at the time that Torres determines to be “midnight.” Here, Torres’s deeper voice takes on the role of dictating the time when Silvestri might have been robbed of the ability to control what was happening to her child body.

11 Gayle Rubin, “Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality,” *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. C. Vance (London: Routledge, 1984) 272.



However, when their bodies meet, Silvestri forcefully drives her vagina over the dildo on Torres's back, assuming an active role that alarmingly contrasts to her earlier sentiment, "I don't know what happened to me." While her poem brings the question of consent to the forefront of this scene, she now forces Torres to wince, cringe, and moan, driving her torso downwards toward the ground with each thrust of her hips. As an Argentine woman dominates the Spanish performer in every scene of this performance, the question of top/bottom, colonizer/colonized is challenged and stretched ahistorically to imply other times and contortions of power.

Not only could this be interpreted as a physical and erotic break from the colonization of Argentina by Spain (as an Argentine woman mounts and dominates a Spanish woman), but it might evoke the histories of authoritarian dictatorship in Spain as well as in Argentina as a position of power/domination (formed outside of the penetrator/penetrated dichotomy) comes into the physical arrangement and maneuvers of the first scene. I see this scene as a rewriting of colonial fantasies that questions the consent of Latin America to be colonized by Spain as well as the subsequent regimes of authoritarian terror that continued the tradition of patriarchal exploitation in both regions.

Scene 2: "And the pain waits, like everything"

Silvestri dismounts Torres, after grinding into her rigorously throughout the last scene. Torres then discards the dildo she was wearing on her back, throwing it to the side of the stage as Silvestri unceremoniously explores Torres's vagina to pull out a poem encased in a yellow condom. The condom stretches to about a foot in length before flaccidly flopping out of her vagina. She then takes the poem out, and Torres throws the wet condom at the audience. Silvestri unravels the rolled up poem and stands over Torres, now prostrate on the floor, her cargo boot pressed down just above Torres's vulva. She begins to read a poem that speaks of a painfully mundane timescape: "*And the pain waits, like everything ... The pain is a woman, turning 40, married with children.*" The mundane and durational violences of a heteronormative timescape seem to become perversely interjected by the explicit violences enacted by Hitler and his assistant in the scene that follows.

Silvestri stands, legs slightly spread, with her side to the audience. She vainly smooths her short hair backwards with both hands as Torres crawls on all fours toward her strap-on and draws it into her mouth. Silvestri continues to vainly stroke her hair, cocking her head as if she is looking at her reflection



in a mirror, her gaze facing the audience. Suddenly, she positions one arm in a Nazi salute and the other in what appears to be a miming of Hitler's mustache, two fingertips on her upper lip. A woman's voice recorded in English begins to play backwards, indecipherable, as Torres begins to deep throat Hitler's strap-on.¹² Another woman walks on stage, topless, and begins to pump a shiny plastic gun into Torres's rear, as she continues to be orally penetrated by "Hitler."

By setting the destructions of the past in the present erotic moment (as one Pornoterrorist mimics Hitler while the other sucks Hitler's dildo and is penetrated from behind with a fake gun covered by a condom), Silvestri challenges us to connect our own traumatic histories (as well as the history of fascism) with the erotic pulsations normally associated with viewing pornography. The increase in the viewer's pulse in response to this image could reflect a cardiovascular response to violence and/or to sexual arousal.

What effect might the audience experience when conceptualizing Hitler's fascism while being turned on? Is the sucking of Hitler's dildo a voluntary act based in an attraction to power or a torture enforced by the plastic gun penetrating Torres from behind? Pornoterrorists invoke history in a visceral manner, opening us up to feel and question fascism as a sexual force. We might imagine Torres as either a voluntary or involuntary participant in the erotic circulation of power and also recognize the homoeroticism deployed under the aegis of fraternity in the propaganda that helped build Hitler's following.¹³ What feels erotic is never morally or temporally cohesive. History appears in ways that might be better told by the erratic pattern of the erotic, wavering between past and present forms of relevance rather than the linear fashion of cause-and-effect models.

12 The sound, which I have identified as English playing backwards, is barely identifiable as such. Taken out of the normative temporal cadence of certain sounds and syllables identifiable as English, this newly mechanized speech sounds closer to German, or rather an alien, cyborgial or computerized voice mimicking German. I came across a solo performance of Silvestri in Argentina and played the video backwards. I found that the poem read backwards is actually the English version of the poem read in Spanish in Scene 1 of this performance, potentially recorded during Silvestri's prior performance in Argentina. While the oppressively mechanical sound of this backwards language seems to violently overlay the image of Hitler in this scene (or vice versa), it also reflects an extended transnational journey from one performance to another and one cultural context to another, laden with potential linguistic mistranslations and disarmingly unidentifiable sounds.

13 For a more thorough examination of homoeroticism and Nazi Germany see: Judith Halberstam, "The Killer in Me Is the Killer in You: Homosexuality and Fascism," *The Queer Art of Failure* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2011) 147-73.



Scene 3: “Not your blood, nor mine”

Torres sits on a high stool, legs spread broadly. Silvestri hands her the microphone and licks her fingers before swiftly inserting them in Torres’s vagina, looking to the audience and grinning. Torres begins to read another poem, punctuated by commentary to Silvestri as well as to the audience: “My Vagina: you are three months of pleasure. I don’t have more borders to contain you! From these fragile bursting walls. Mmmm, how rich/wonderful, Antonia!”¹⁴ Silvestri’s entire fist thrusts deep into Torres’s vagina, and the Spaniard’s noises of anguish and pleasure increasingly interject her poem. “It’s not mine, nor yours! Uhhh, nor from the two together. Ooof, My vagina reclaims the thirst of victory over your wings, closed over me. Mmmm, Uhhh, My vagina has a magic trick: If you say ‘Shhh,’ (Silvestri jokingly mouths ‘Shhh’ to the audience with a toothy smile), I pull out a rabbit (dramatic pause) ... that never eats carrots. Mmm, give it to me right there. My vagina cries out for blood! But not your blood, nor mine, nor of the two of us together, if not blood of Aztecs, of lamb, of lunar sacrifice. My vagina assassinates like the carnivorous plant that desires flies! Uhhh.”

The question of whose blood flows through this scene is curious. “*My vagina cries out for blood.*” We might also wonder, throughout the piece, whose blood the vagina calls out for, and what histories are called upon and implied by the erotic antics of the performers. “*But not your blood, nor mine. Nor of the two of us together.*” Are the performers interested in spilling the blood of their oppressors, or are they more concerned with connecting to the blood of their ancestors? What if their immediate or distant ancestors are and were their oppressors? The connection between the blood of ancestors and the theme of patriarchy is clear throughout the piece, from colonizer to birth father to dictatorships fueled by familial propaganda. While the blood of Hitler and the Holocaust might not figure directly into the ancestry of the performers, many Nazis immigrated to Argentina after World War II. What becomes clear is that the blood may not be “mine, nor yours, nor from the two ... together,” but regardless of origin, the vagina calls out for it: for revenge, for erotic pulsations, for history.

Elizabeth Freeman suggests that sadomasochism (S/M) might aim for separations, or depersonalizations, of events by intentionally displacing trauma to have it reorganized and

14 Torres moans almost inadvertently, “que rico, Antonia,” as Silvestri begins to touch her, conflating Silvestri with another potential past or future lover, some historical or mythological reference we are not quick enough to identify, or simply, someone else absent from the scene. Although Antonia may not be identifiable to the audience, she appears to have a complicit and even causal relation to Torres’s pleasure in that moment.



consumed in an entirely different context.¹⁵ She also suggests that in lieu of *displacement*, S/M practices might search for a *condensation* of the collective and the individual. This condensation might be imagined as a “visceral fusion” between past and present, collective and individual, public and private.¹⁶ Silvestri and Torres’s pornoterrorist performance, which seems to span many histories from scene to scene, may conceive of various *displacements* in relation to history as well as *visceral fusions*. Displacements may occur in the shifting of similar symptoms of the abuse of power over different historical moments and memories, colliding histories that cannot possibly belong to both performers. Visceral fusions may occur at the point of individual contact between the present body and a past horror known to that body or its bloodlines, which may be both “public and past.”¹⁷

The performers may navigate the implications of a melancholic relation to the father and to patriarchy, both through displacement and through visceral fusions. While the first scene implies a personal memory of child molestation, it also could connect mass symptoms of patriarchal abuse and male privilege that can supersede the integrity of heteronormative familial norms and the impetus to protect children from sexuality. This childhood memory could reflect, as Freeman suggests, a “return to an archaic and more chaotic psychic place, often allegorized as a historical moment that is definitely over.”¹⁸ In the next scene of the performance, that chaotic psychic place is allegorically stretched to imply colonization, the holocaust, and more explicitly, dictatorship.

Other bloods might also imply a “hyperbolic possession of feelings not one’s ‘own.’”¹⁹ The hyperidentification with a differently racialized or gendered history could carry many

15 Elizabeth Freeman, “Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography,” *Social Text* 23.3 (2005) 57-68.

16 “For instance, the powerlessness of a masochist’s infancy can be depersonalized and *displaced* somewhat if it is costumed as an antebellum enslavement he did not go through literally. But conversely, sadomasochism can also aim for a certain *visceral fusion*, a point of somatic contact between a single erotic body in the present tense and an experience coded as both public and past: for instance, a modern day Jewish woman might participate in a reenactment of some horror from the Holocaust, experiencing anti-Semitism in more scripted and overt ways than she does in her everyday life, testing her limits, feeling a corporeal, painful, and/or even pleasurable link to her ancestors.” See: Freeman, “Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography,” 143. Emphasis is mine.

17 Freeman, “Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography,” 143.

18 Freeman, “Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography,” 143.

19 Freeman, “Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography,” 144.



other complexities.²⁰ Or, we might find libidinal reattachments to a socially inappropriate and taboo history like incest even more inappropriate when hyperconnected to a series of histories that seem dissimilar and impossible to compare yet eerily aligned under a larger conspiracy. This performance implies connections between individual and collective histories, bringing libidinal reattachments to the present scene that may connect not just to our own histories, but also to histories that are not ours to claim.

Scene 4: “Father, from you I learned ...”

Silvestri sits on the black couch, knees together. Torres lays limply over her, as Silvestri circles her palm around Torres’s exposed rear. She casually reassures the audience, “One day you are going to have daughters, like us” The crowd cheers and laughs with some salient screams of support for that notion.

“Father, from you I learned ...” Silvestri hits Torres’s ass two times with her black dildo, “...fear, terror, and panic.” She then slaps her three times inducing three cries of pain from Torres. Massaging her behind soothingly, “I learned to rape, kill, and wound.” She contracts her face with exaggerated cruelty as she smoothly transitions from rubbing to slapping Torres’s ass.

Rubbing her again, “I learned to eat my snot, to cry in bed, to shit myself over it.” She slaps her again three times. With a feigned and darkly grateful tone, “Father, from you I learned the cold shower, the humid submarine (submarino húmedo), the rude hairs.” She screams, taking on her father’s voice again and hitting Torres harder, “Terrible girl, filthy girl! Why were you ever born?” The crowd gasps as she lowers her tone, “From you, father, I learned everything you tried to teach me.”

Silvestri slaps Torres three more times and thrusts her to the floor. She falls limply, with a thud. The crowd cheers and both women stand. Torres kisses Silvestri’s hand and then lips.

20 Silvestri’s ability to inflict the terror of Hitler on Torres’s mouth in Scene 2 and the wrath of her father on Torres’s ass in Scene 4 might connect Silvestri’s physical acts to the men that invaded women’s bodies in Argentina and, thus, she perversely reclaims a bit of her national heritage. This might pose a reclamation of history that remains undifferentiated racially, as her identification with these figures occurs in light of her racial make-up as an Argentine woman, and it is left up to us to imagine whether she carries more Spanish, indigenous, or other bloods. Her gendered position as a woman implies that her relation to these histories could even negate her subjectivity, as these histories systematically violated women. However, she also complicates this history: as she re-visions herself as the colonizer and the colonized, the tortured and the torturer, Silvestri hyperbolically identifies across times and identities that may not cohere beyond the erotic flows of this performance.



In this scene Silvestri spans Torres vigorously, addressing her father in first person and then imitating his insults, all the while making eye contact with the audience. Relative to the other scenes, here the past seems to be tangible as Silvestri appropriates her father's "teachings" with each spank of Torres's behind. Her eye contact with the audience alludes to further implications of responsibility, as her language references violences inflicted beyond the scope of her biological father: "*Father, from you I learned to rape, kill, and wound.*" Here, she may be referring to other models of patriarchy that extend beyond her father's intrusion of her body to that of the state, to the Spanish colonizers of Latin America, to the subsequent authoritarian regimes of Perón in Argentina and Franco in Spain.²¹

In a suspiciously Oedipal way, we see that Silvestri is in many respects her fathers' daughter—violent, perverse, and capable of similar deeds. As the past enters the present scene, Silvestri seems to make time reverberate in our minds as she inverts the roles of father and daughter, colonizer and colonized, thus disrupting the potential for Oedipal succession and disregarding the aversion to incest. Rather, she expands incest to reveal other political tensions and patriarchal damages across time. As she, an Argentine woman, raises her hand over her Spanish co-performer's rear, she brings into view potentially personal effects of national histories. As she re-visions the colonizer as herself and the colonized as her co-performer, her father as herself and her co-performer as her child self, she may be engaging in what Ann Cvetkovich has called "revisionist histories" that, through their reframing, have the potential to "avoid the emotional simplifications that can sometimes accompany representations of even the most unassimilable historical traumas."²²

Historical trauma coalesces explicitly around this scene with Silvestri's reference to the "*submarino húmedo*," or, the humid submarine. She remembers darkly, "*Father, from you I learned the cold shower, the humid submarine, the rude hairs*" In *A Lexicon of Terror*, Marguerite Feitlowitz defines the term in the context of Argentina's Dirty War: "*Submarino* (n. submarine; traditional Argentine children's treat consisting of a chocolate bar slowly melting in a cup of warm milk). Form of torture in which the prisoner's head was held under water befouled with urine and feces. When the victim was on the verge of suffocation, his head would be raised

21 Or she may be referring obliquely to the metaphor of father-daughter incest on a personal level to illuminate state-level bodily intrusions.

22 Ann Cvetkovich, "Drawing the Archive in Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*," *WSQ: Women's Studies Quarterly* 36.1-2 (2008): 125.



and then dunked again.”²³ Feitlowitz also makes a connection between the quotidian nature of this torture during dictatorship and the cultural reference it exploits: “In Argentina, kids are served submarinos most every day after school; it is still on the menu at any café.” The use of such comfortable and innocent temporal schemes was exploited under dictatorship to help break down the psyches of the *desaparecidos* (disappeared) during interrogations at the hands of the state. Similarly, when Silvestri concludes, “*Father, from you I learned everything you tried to teach me,*” she makes a crucial connection between personal and national histories as she, in turn, exploits the same shock effect for the audience: childhood innocence alongside adult perversion.

Silvestri takes her presumably first-person accounts of child abuse and incest to an elsewhere that becomes very tangible in the performance; the lessons of her father seem to intertwine with her own erotic activities as she aggressively and then playfully spans Torres’s ass. Her acts might connect Silvestri to the men that invaded women’s bodies in Argentina, and thus, she perversely reclaims a bit of her heritage. But her performance of this violence does not look like that of the past, for she inflicts it with a dislocated dildo and a temporally present female body. It is historical trauma brought back in a new form, performed by a female-bodied person in place of a man, performed on the land of the “colonizer” by the “colonized,” creating a gendered and racialized, temporal and spatial reversal.

This last scene best illustrates the queer temporality of pornoterrorism that looks toward a future that might emerge from destruction. “*One day you are going to have daughters like us,*” signals a futurity to be determined on the continued motion of perversity, a means for the temporality of “always-becoming”²⁴ that has the potential to extend beyond the end of biological reproduction, and the hinging of politics upon “reproductive futurity.”²⁵ In spite of the

23 Marguerite Feitlowitz, *A Lexicon of Terror: Argentina and the Legacies of Torture* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2011) 67.

24 The convergence of the past and present in Scene 4 may signal the emergence of new temporalities of “always-becoming,” a continual ontological emergence that requires no fixed identity politics (a Deleuzian becoming without being, in which Jasbir Puar asserts that queerness dissipates the subject as such) See: Jasbir K. Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2007) xxxiii. If the convergence of different times conflates innocence and perversion in a way that is socially abject, abjection then plays a part in delaying “being” in favor of a temporality of “always-becoming.”

25 See: Lee Edelman, *No Future: Queer Theory and the Death Drive* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). In the book, Edelman develops the concept of “reproductive futurity” as an attitude underlying the politics that



inevitable and continued motions of heteronormativity (like the birth of more daughters), the sexual-terrorist practices of Pornoterrorists reintroduce their child selves into the present to critique the past. Although figured ahistorically, this scene could represent a queer refusal to grow up, a move sideways²⁶ that stalls the adherence of unjust times into a cohesive present by refusing a psychic wholeness characteristic of adulthood. This interruption breaks from the notion that a daughter might learn her relation to perversion (and even queer negativity) from her father to suggest that she might learn to pervert others in a less Oedipal and more collective way by never forgetting and ever incorporating. The stalling of heteronormative progressions in psychoanalytic theory and the refusal to forget certain histories (that are inappropriate to remember) might cause those times to live on, asynchronously into the future. Pornoterrorists present a collection of times that, despite their connections, refuse to cohere. As time itself is intentionally stalled and exploded in this piece, I believe we can recognize an anarchic relation to time, a temporality of terror.

The Temporality of Terror

Referencing Nilüfer Göle's *Close Encounters*,²⁷ Jasbir Puar discusses the idea of a "snapshot" as a break or explosion in the present moment that allows different temporalities to emerge. Puar writes that a snapshot might help theorize a terrorist event as it "encompasses the temporalities of the instant and the image, of fast-forwarding, rewinding, and shuddering, rather than being strictly anchored to past, present and future."²⁸ For the audience members, the multiple retellings of childhood abuse and various colonizations may be experienced as a "fast-forwarding, rewinding, and shuddering." The terrorist moment as a snapshot builds a narrative of time before

situates the Child as the future and maintains the social order. Pornoterrorists take their child selves from the past into the present to critique that social order, creating a sort of reversal of Edelman's very critique.

26 See: Katherine Bond Stockton, *The Queer Child: Or Growing Sideways in the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2009) 4. Stockton writes that the child's delay "spreads sideways—or sideways and backwards—more than a simple thrust toward height and forward time." Similarly, Pornoterrorists move backwards across time in a curious sideways manner that gathers the effects of melancholia from a terrifying timeline traversed in this performance.

27 Nilüfer Göle, "Close Encounters: Islam, Modernity, and Violence," *Understanding September 11*, eds. C. Calhoun, P. Price, and A. Timmer (New York: The New Press, 2002) 332-44.

28 Puar xviii.



and after the event that is blurred by the event itself. This could spawn conceptualizations of past and future that might not be disseminated without the chaos and shock that destabilize the present moment. Through violence and performative disidentifications,²⁹ Pornoterrorists may help audience members view the various scenes as a series of snapshots by implementing the violent shock of abjection as well as inappropriate pleasures from scene to scene.

This pornoterrorist performance, however, does not consist of a single snapshot moment, but rather a dense series of acts with multiple references to historical moments within each scene. This small period of time through which so many events filter resembles William James's notion of an "enlarged timescape." Puar quotes Oliver Sacks's explanation that "the apparent slowing of time in emergencies ... may come from the power of intense attention to reduce the duration of individual frames." She adds, "So, in the midst of the frenetic speeds of crisis and urgency, a slowing of time happens, and with it, a deeper scrutiny of every single experienced moment," an "enlarged and spacious timescape."³⁰ I imagine that pornoterrorism creates an "enlarged" but also *engorged* timescape that offers the potential for time to slow down and for intense scrutiny of past, present, and future to begin. In this timescape, Avery Gordon's concept of "haunting" might more readily come to the surface of time as it slows and intensifies, opening up the space for "transformative recognition." Haunting, according to Gordon, draws on us affectively and often against our will so that we might experience a "transformative recognition."³¹ This haunting might be likened to the transformative recognition that leads an individual or a collective to think critically about their destructive histories when they reappear in an embodied form. The Argentine woman who arrives in the land of her colonizers,

29 José Muñoz seems to conclude that pleasure can be experienced alongside melancholia from a feeling of social subversion. "Disidentificatory pleasure" acknowledges what is disturbing about familiar forms of objectification and does not dismiss that pleasure for its political danger. See: Muñoz 70, 63-74. Maria Torok views the resurgence of erotic feelings toward a lost object as a physical rather than social phenomenon. See: Maria Torok, "The Illness of Mourning and the Fantasy of the Exquisite Corpse," *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis*, ed. Nicholas T. Rand, vol. 1 (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994) 107-24. In line with Torok, Pornoterrorists also seem to be enacting this resurgence through a primarily physical reworking. However, there are certainly aspects of joy in a socially subversive "disidentificatory pleasure" at play. Jasbir Puar's terrorist temporalities seem capable of uniting both a social and a physical response to trauma, in that we might be both socially and physically shocked by the snapshot.

30 Puar xxi.

31 Avery Gordon, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1997) 8.



centuries after colonization, to dominate and penetrate the Spanish performer in almost every scene presents a challenge to the linear course of history, bringing a bloody history back to Spanish soil: a haunting that refuses to leave the stage.

The temporality marked by the speeds of crisis or emergency can be invoked by both terrorist attacks and by the interrogating nature of a pornoterrorist performance. In these chaotic timescapes, time seems to slow as each moment comes under intense scrutiny. From scene to scene, Pornoterrorists pack in narratives that are redolent of distinctly violent and erotic moments in history, causing these times to bump up against one another in an inappropriately arousing way. Terrorizing our gaze with multiple representations of history, misconstrued and improper, Pornoterrorists enlarge our perceptual timescape, causing it to grow and even become engorged. Forcing the audience to travel ahistorically across a terrifying timeline, Silvestri and Torres demonstrate how one's perception of self in relation to time may also be delayed from cohering toward an explicit or imagined future. The temporal disturbance detonated by Pornoterrorists presents what we might consider a queerly desirable temporality of terror.

Terrifying Melancholia

Pornoterrorists suggest, as Baudrillard does, that terror “is already present everywhere, in institutional violence, both mental and physical, in homeopathic doses,” and that “terrorism merely crystalizes all of the ingredients in suspension.”³² Rather than the conditions that hide terror and spread it out over time under the protection of normalizations and institutionalizations (of systematic and periodic violences), the *act* (a sort of crystallization) that incorporates those terrors by sharply interjecting them into the present moment is what terrorizes us. If the terror is already there, under the surface for some but tangible for others, bringing that terror to light is the terrifying act, akin to the inappropriate response facilitated by melancholia. The “erotic terror” discussed previously, a societal preoccupation around child sexuality, is not only exploited in this piece but also manically cathected to more collective histories.

The notion that we are not insulated from the past (that the past can seep into the present moment) might seem upsetting to some, holding a terrifying and haunting capacity. Lauren Berlant points out that trauma and structural subordination are experienced contrarily,

32 Jean Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism and Other Essays*, trans. C. Turner (London: Verso, 2003) 59.



differentiated by the various tonalities of race, class, and privilege: “Trauma takes you out of your life shockingly, and places you into another one, whereas structural subordination is not a surprise to the subjects who experience it, and the pain of subordination is ordinary life.”³³ Following this point, a tone injected by difference might show that what is perceived as shocking and traumatic to one person may make up the quotidian and commonplace experiences of others. The traumas invoked by the experience of this piece might reflect differing structural subordinations over time that are no surprise to the performers, but when these traumas are performed for the audience members, they take them out of their lives, shockingly, whether or not they share these traumas. In this way, the performers redeploy the effects of melancholia toward the time consciousness of the audience. Displaying the erotic navigations of a melancholic subjectivity, the performers supply the unexpected sensations of melancholia for their audience, who might not mourn the same pasts but may feel fully the sensual (mis)translations of transnational losses presented in the performance.

This performance provides the audience with reiterations of traumatic pasts, both at the individual and collective levels; however, for the performers, there are no longer any originary traumas present, but instead a new and “fully sensual” interaction with the past.³⁴ By referencing these traumas alongside their pleasure in the present, the performers might invoke for the audience a terrifying melancholia that, by conflating desire with shocking and upsetting pasts, might feel like an “irreparable crime.” Maria Torok describes melancholia in these terms: “The illness of mourning [i.e., melancholia] does not result, as might appear, from the affliction caused by the objectal loss itself, but rather from the feeling of an irreparable crime: of having been overcome with desire, of having been surprised by an overflow of libido at the least appropriate moment, when it would behoove us to be grieved in despair.”³⁵ Pornoterrorists seem to ahistorically invoke the same feeling of an irreparable crime as they cause their audience to share in their desire, surprised by their libidos at these inappropriate moments.

33 Lauren Berlant, “The Subject of True Feeling: Pain, Privacy, and Politics,” *Transformations: Thinking through Feminism*, eds. Sara Ahmed, Jane Kilby, Celia Lury, Maureen McNeil, and Beverly Skeggs (London: Routledge, 2000) 42.

34 “Venturing where Sigmund Freud would not, Torok has theorized a version of the possibility a fully sensual rather than merely verbal or narrative relation to the past.” See: Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2010) 119.

35 As quoted in Freeman, *Time Binds, Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*, 119.



Pornoterrorists present a finely tuned time consciousness that brings the past inappropriately into the present, sharing that consciousness with the audience. They prompt us to consider that if we maintain a somewhat blissful suspension between past loss and present pleasure in our queerly melancholic psyches (not fully moving beyond the abstract and collective losses of freedom during dictatorship or innocence during childhood), we might also prolong an ever-approaching, sensual relation to those losses that never fully respects the origins of those past traumas. Rather, we might prefer a temporality of always-becoming, to let that sensual feeling toward loss continually and perversely resurface in the present, never absolving the past of these traumas but reconfiguring them as new pleasures. Not assimilating such a trauma could also maintain a highly sensitized postcolonial consciousness that keeps colonialism in play and at bay, not fully meshed with the colonial past nor with its critique, but rather in suspension between them (in both our pleasures and in our analyses). Not fully departing from traumatic histories might also create a radical incorporation, an insistence on the pain and pleasure of that trauma in the present that persists relentlessly like a haunting, as seductive as it is sacrilegious. If “*the pain waits, like everything*,” then making that pain relevant in the present on the collective scale could slow our perception so that we can experience transformative recognitions about traumas that are both ours and not our own.

A terrorizing melancholia is a collective melancholia, disseminated from one person’s experience shockingly onto another’s, a hyperidentification with multiple pasts, multiple subjectivities that may overwhelm one another when overlapped. Freeman writes on Judith Butler’s use of allegory:

For allegory might be seen as the form of *collective* melancholia. Melancholia connotes inward movement, for it preserves the lost object as an aspect of [the] grieving person’s subjectivity, interior, unconscious. Allegory, on the other hand, traffics in collectively held meanings and experiences, pushing the melancholic’s rather solipsistic incorporation back outward in order to remake the world in a mock-imperialist gesture.³⁶

In the case of pornoterrorism, projecting incorporation back outward to remake the world might push back upon patriarchy by exploiting the very forces that make it powerful and harmful. This profane use of past traumas could also serve as a queer world-making tool, utilizing

36 Freeman, *Time Binds, Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories*, 70.



fantasies of hyperbolic projection outwards.³⁷ The queer world-making facilitated by this shocking performance of melancholic relations to traumatic pasts could indeed be described as a mock-imperialist gesture in the same way that it is a mock-terrorist gesture, calling many powerful personal and political events into question at once.

The loss of subjectivity written into many hegemonic texts of history seems always already melancholic. To reinsert oneself as an agent in an oppressive history, especially in a pornographic context, is also to encounter libidinal reattachments to a widespread loss concerning certain subjectivities. In this sense, pornoterrorism may supply a terrifyingly melancholic relation with history such that those robbed of subjectivity at multiple points on the historical timeline revisit those historical junctures to reterrorize, to breach the unfavorable flows of power with newly terrifying and more favorable erogenous flows.

Composting History

Composting requires the breaking down of constituents that were once alive. Dirt is then produced from a collection of materials that aid one another in their corrosion: a decaying process that requires the breaking down of one substance to facilitate the disintegration of others. This process of composting can metaphorically demonstrate the value of destructing multiple histories simultaneously so that as one aspect of history begins to break down in our minds, others may follow. And, as with compost, when everything decays at once, heat arises.

The ingredients composted by this performance draw on histories different from those cited in US queer theory. My ambition in writing this paper is that these terrifyingly cathected histories across disparate times might begin to corrode the official archive in US queer theory. If US queer theory offers a description that is useful to pornoterrorism, this performance practice must then also serve to expand the current debates around queer temporality. Pornoterrorists enact a radical destruction to the queer theoretical archives I employ to describe them. As they provoke a hyperbolic identification with others' losses, they simultaneously corrode

37 Elsewhere in *Time Binds*, Freeman describes a “‘hyperbolic’ possession of feelings not one’s ‘own’” that might also break melancholia out of the personal and into the collective to hyperidentify with differently racialized and gendered histories made more monstrous when connected inappropriately across times that do not cohere. See: Freeman, *Time Binds*, *Queer Temporalities*, *Queer Histories*, 144.



the material upon which the official US archive stands. This might become more apparent and problematic as we compost histories and theories from different countries and contexts.

Unlike the forms of self-shattering described by Leo Bersani and Lee Edelman,³⁸ Pornoterrorists enjoy a different relation to shattering that they control in the present, shattering past realities that are saturated with multiple rapes, colonizations, and exploitations. They make visible a politics of negativity that does not come from white male privilege yet perversely draws upon it. To reduce the hyperreferentiality of such histories in this performance piece to a solely reparative reading³⁹ due to its engagement with connectivity would be to confer a patriarchal gaze upon it, writing off the performance for its feminine stereotype of weaving together different times.⁴⁰ However, uncondensed and expanded, the performance might be viewed as a terrifyingly negative force that harnesses the power of destructions and negations despite its insistence on connectivity. I believe the hyperbolic projection present in this performance piece unites disparate histories without repairing them. When we examine such histories through an erotic lens, we might find them more troubling for their mutual conceptualization, showing that weaving together and connecting can offer a form of negativity that disaggregates as it unites. Here, the metaphor of composting reveals reparation or transformation only through recognition of difference and mutual decay. The effects of hyperbolic identification with past and present swellings of power may be as problematic as they are reparative.

Pornoterrorists present a particularly unabiding⁴¹ negativity in the present so that we might imagine melancholic relations to the past that, although often rooted in patriarchal

38 Leo Bersani, "Is the Rectum a Grave?" *October* 43 (1987):197-222; Edelman.

39 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading; or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction Is about You," *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in Fiction*, ed. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 1997) 1-37.

40 Weaving, popularly associated with native traditions of women's handicraft as well as artwork made to engage the issues of second-wave feminism, is explored in relation to Harmony Hammond's work on the binary oppositions concerning craft—"high/low, masculine/feminine, functional/decorative"—and pertains to perceptions of high/low theory and the dismissal of certain forms of queer negativity that I address in this paper. See: Julia Bryan-Wilson, "Queerly Made: Harmony Hammond's Floorpieces," *Journal of Modern Craft* 2.1 (2009): 59-79.

41 See Robert L. Caserio et al. "Forum: Conference Debates: The Antisocial Thesis in Queer Theory," *PMLA* 121.3 (2006): 819-36. This is not the "abiding negativity" (Caserio et al., pp. 821-823) that Edelman employs to critique Judith Halberstam's identification of "other-shattering[s]" present in examples that are inscribed with rage outside of "the [white] gay male archive" (Caserio et al., pp. 823-825). Edelman's critique calls upon the



abuse, are capable of challenging a spectator who seeks to replicate the same avenues of libidinal attachment to the piece, trading them for the new arrangements wrought by the performers. The performance's jarring rearrangements of historical consciousness may counter reductive attempts to look upon the piece, allowing "revisionist histories" to restore an "archive of feeling"⁴² left out of the official archives.

These histories present intense situations of loss, requiring a tenuous balance between remembering and forgetting discussed by Chilean theorist Nelly Richard in *Cultural Residues*.⁴³ To forget is to shamefully lose the past, and to remember dictatorship is to automatically and pathologically fail at forgetting. However, there are situations in which that failure is useful and necessary. Pornoterrorists manically incorporate these pasts, exploiting the problematics of historical memory in postdictatorial times so that they might help us evade these haunting histories by reinventing them, sucking them, and grinding into them.

Pornoterrorists present an engorged historical consciousness respectful of transnational histories of patriarchy, leeching the negativity from these histories in a way that collects their blood in the present, so that an archive of *negative* feeling can flow from their performance in a monstrous and terrorizing form. It is difficult to see how this performance, even if it serves to connect diverse histories, could appear to be "abiding," as this form of queer negativity would seem to reinforce Edelman's requirement that this pedagogy be "inflected by the queer remainder that every good denies."⁴⁴ This mandate produces a binary in the queer temporal debates that, although challenged by many, remains the only terms, tired as they may be, to describe conflicts in temporal theorizations in the United States. In contrast to this binary, Pornoterrorists present a stance that may be as divisive as it is reparative. Pornoterrorism

same sort of condensation that reduces another person's experience of shattering as not *pure* enough, while failing to recognize itself as an argument contingent upon a privileged separation from such shatterings.

42 Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings, Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2003).

43 See: Nelly Richard, *Cultural Residues: Chile in Transition*, trans. Alan West-Durán and Theodor Quester (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004) 22. Richard writes, "The melancholic dilemma between 'assimilating' (remembering) and 'expelling' (forgetting) traverses the postdictatorial horizon, producing narratives divided between a muteness—the lack of speech linked to the stupor of a series of changes that, given their velocity and magnitude, cannot be assimilated to the continuity of a subject's experience—and over-stimulation: compulsive gestures that artificially exaggerate the rhythm and signs to combat depressive tendencies with their artificial mobility."

44 Edelman, as quoted in Caserio et al. 822.



calls forth an army of past and present subaltern bodies⁴⁵ exploited on multiple levels in a transnational critique that presents the acrid smell of unaddressed terrors.

Interestingly, the calling forth of uncounted and unrepresented souls lost over time also brings to light a commonality with postporn politics shared by US theorizations. Frankenstein's monster, in Freeman's example of "erotohistoriography," could be considered a post-pornographic body, a patchwork of the corpses of men sewn together in the same way that Lee Edelman views the cum of many men frozen into the shape of a phallus as a particularly postporn manifestation of the semen lost in 73 cum shots and many other erotic encounters.⁴⁶ Postpornography seems to desire loss to come back in physical form, a form of material-loving melancholia⁴⁷ that cries for the "queer touch of time"⁴⁸ to make past losses tangible in the present. My own quasi-reparative act of reading together Edelman's essay "Unbecoming: Pornography and the Queer Event" and Freeman's theorizations of erotohistoriography combines these arguments to view how pornoterrorism can expand postpornography as well as US theory to defend subaltern subjectivities both ours and not our own.⁴⁹ However, like pornoterrorism, as I am connecting these theories, I am also attempting to disintegrate them by composting them with other histories. Postpornography, whether in an explicitly patriarchal context or not, displays and fetishizes a composting that coagulates loss. In pornoterrorism, history is broken down through an incestuous self-referentiality so that we might desire it under new terms and in a new form.

45 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Champaign: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1988) 271-313.

46 Lee Edelman, "Unbecoming: Pornography and the Queer Event," *Post/Porn/Politics*, ed. Tim Stüttgen (Berlin: B-Books, 2009) 31-45.

47 See: Freeman, "Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography," 58. "That is, melancholic queer theory may acquiesce to the idea that pain must laboriously rework into pleasure if we are to have any pleasure at all—is the proper ticket into historical consciousness."

48 See: Freeman, "Time Binds, or, Erotohistoriography," 60. "[The monster's] body literalizes Carolyn Dinshaw's model of the queer touch of time, of past bodies palpably connecting with present ones."

49 Both Freeman and Edelman theorize from pornographic practices influenced by queer BDSM cultures. Although these cultures often borrow from one another transnationally via online social networks, pornography, and travel, we might also consider that acts of union in theory might mirror such transnational sexual encounters online and in person. Should they come into transnational contact, certain histories referenced in this piece would certainly remain in the "not one's own" category. Like unthoughtful applications of theory, the sex acts of persons who remain unaware of those histories might fail to produce visceral fusions between subjects with varying relations to diverse times and lineages of power.



I have theorized that when presented next to each other, these histories mutually decay. However, they also lend themselves to a hyperbolic identification with others' losses that might corrode the differences between those losses in a perverse reconstitution of queer world-making. The idea that we might be forced to consider histories that do not directly affect our subjectivities might produce such manically pleasurable forms of melancholia for others' pasts that it constructs queer worlds only possible after their mutual corrosion, where the destruction of one past bleeds into another. When one trauma becomes visible, contingent upon similar forms of oppression, it might become compostable, although it is constituted differently. Transformative recognition could be facilitated by the hemorrhaging of diverse times: a temporality of terror that blurs past, present, and future so they can mutually bleed.



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